

Good Evening, Members of the Council, Citizens who are with us in the audience and all Citizens of Lafayette.

It is my honor, as the Mayor of your City, to present to you my State of the City Address tonight, January 5, 2009.

I would like to begin by thanking the members of this Council, the members of our Boards and Commissions, the City Staff, and Department Heads for their commitment to our community. A special thanks to our City employees who again in a very efficient, cost effective manner delivered outstanding City services.

We are blessed with one of the best communities anywhere in this country, because we have citizens who get involved, who care and work to make a difference. I look forward to continuing to work with everyone in 2009.

Tonight I will speak very little about the past but more about the future and the philosophy that will guide us through 2009 and into 2010. We know that the economy on a national level and in our state as well as in our community is facing many challenges. While we acknowledge this fact, we will not let this deter us from our mission of making the Lafayette community strong, prosperous, forward thinking and creative.

While there maybe some apprehension throughout the country we will not allow that to slow us down. In 2009 we will go forward with the widening of 350 South, we will continue to move forward on the Concord Road Project, and Maple Point Drive. We will continue our work on Service Area 21 and other infrastructure projects that will allow us to grow, support job creation and increase capacity to handle our Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) issues.

We will to continue to look at ways to make downtown grow and prosper. We will continue with our Street Scape projects. We will continue with our Economic Development efforts to attract investment and create new jobs. We will do those things that will aggressively market our community and continue to send the message not only throughout the United States but to the world that Lafayette is “Open for Business.” We will use this opportunity to strengthen our foundation, to promote our economic diversity, to continue to build our workforce and stress education and training. We stand ready to work with our local businesses to help them through this difficult period. It is our goal to emerge ahead of our national economy, not playing catch up, but having already captured opportunities.

We will work diligently on public safety, continue and grow our Weed and Seed Program, our Shelter Plus Care program, and reach out to those in our community who are the most in need. We will look for opportunities to partner on public-private projects,

to look for grants and outside funding to do those things that improve the quality of life for all citizens in our community. The redevelopment of Bridgeway Apartments to a contributing asset to the neighborhood and the City of Lafayette is a top priority.

We will continue to work on the development of the Wabash River Corridor that will create recreational and community development opportunities and help designate our area as a place of choice. We will continue to work on improving our environment through green and sustainable initiatives such as projects to help eliminate our Combined Sewer Overloads or CSOs that will help improve water quality for our citizens and the Wabash River. We explore hybrid and electric vehicles where feasible to lessen our use of gasoline and do our part to lessen our country's dependence on foreign oil. We will also continue to lead by example by exploring and implementing green and sustainable building and construction practices such as the renovation of 515 Columbia for new city offices.

During difficult times, it would be easy to simply pull back and wait, but I plan with the help of this Council and the great spirit of our citizens and all the members of this community, not to wait, but to move our community forward.

I view this as a time of great opportunity, a time when we must look inward to ourselves for creativity, strength and new ideas, and we will do just that. We will implement new technologies and systems to work smarter and faster. We will look for new opportunities that will drive down the cost of our products we have to purchase. We will continue

to collaborate with other local units of government in any way possible.

I believe our citizens expect nothing less, they expect a government who is ready to meet the challenges of today and the challenges of tomorrow. A government that can perform well in good times and a government that can perform well in difficult times.

I have no intention of any reduction in services to our citizens, yet we will ask things of our citizens. When it comes to recycling, we need their help. Every person in Lafayette must recycle. We will ask our citizens to be good ambassadors. We need our citizens through their business interactions, professional affiliations, travels throughout the United States and aboard and casual conversation to let people know that Lafayette is “Open for Business” and it is a great place to live, work and be successful. We must spread the word that we have a diverse economic base. We have a municipal government that is on a solid foundation. We have a tremendous work force, and value education. We have a very clean prosperous city with good parks, nice trails, good schools and arts and culture opportunities. We need all our citizens to be ambassadors for our community, we need to encourage people to look at Lafayette during these difficult times as a place where capitol investments still can be made with a good return and strong potential for long term growth and profit. We need to spread the word this is a great place if you are just starting out, if you are looking for a great place to raise a family, or a great place to retire.

I view these times as an opportunity and I believe with all of us working together it will be. Thank-you and May God Bless the City of Lafayette.